PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of Meeting
May 6, 2019

The meeting was called to order by President Stephanie Najjar at 7:00pm. President Najjar noted the meeting was being recorded by Recording Secretary Allison Lytle.

As there was a quorum present, the roll call was taken:

Present	**Absent**
Anne Quinn	Sandra Fecteau
Stephanie Najjar	
Dianne Caputo	
Wes Merrill	
Jean Ahearn	
Thomas Pappas	
Frances Bisazza-Gallugi	
Richard Shruhan	
Kate O'Brien	
Don McAllister	

Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2019 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Kate O'Brien. A vote was taken.
All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Receipt of Communications

President Najjar stated there was no communication on which to report.

Director's Report

Director Melissa Robinson presented the following report and provided the Trustees in attendance with written copies for their information.

Director's Report to the Board of Library Trustees
May 2019

Staffing

Full-time custodian Sean Meagher is currently out on medical leave following a knee injury he sustained while at work. We are awaiting the results of an MRI to determine when he will be able to return to work.

Assistant Director Gerri Guyote's last day is the this Friday, May 10th. The Hiring Committee and I have started the screening process for candidates for the Assistant Director position. I will let the Committee report on its progress.

The vacant Children's Librarian position at the West Branch is on hold until the budget process for FY20 is further along.

Unelia Videira, Alysa Hayden and Yahaira Cosme remain out on parental leave.

The next all staff meeting will be Monday, June 10th. The Main Library will be closed from 9-11am and the branches from 9am-12pm. The two topics of this meeting will be the new web-based circulation system NOBLE is launching this month and how the FY20 budget will be effecting library operations.

Building & Grounds

The Elevator: The elevator oil test finally came back. The lab told the Director of Facilities that the results point towards the oil being typical petroleum based hydraulic fuel. The test also showed a "critical level" of oxidation, but there was no possible explanation given for this. The Director of Facilities believes that we are at the end of the line in terms of trying to locate the likely cause of the elevator's oil problem. As planned, we went forward with the full replacement of the oil, which all parties agreed was degraded and likely causing performance issues and the smell. We also authorized a replacement of the piston packing, which was leaking. These repairs are being paid for from a library capital account. These repairs were completed over the last two weeks and the elevator performed well this past week despite heavy use during PILCon. Unfortunately, today we received reports that the elevator is bouncing up and down when the doors open at the first floor and basement level.

West Branch Windows: The long-delayed capital project to replace five windows at the West Branch is underway. The contractor is hoping to have the job completed today or tomorrow. He is recommending that we do some additional roof repairs to avoid the same type of damage occur again to the new windows. We have asked for a quote on those repairs.

Budget

An updated budget is available for your review and questions if any.

In March, I submitted a budget proposal to the Mayor for FY20, which begins July 1st. I have copies of

this proposed budget available for your review. Due to a projected City-wide budget gap, the Mayor and I have begun discussing significant cuts to this proposed budget. No final decisions have been made, but the discussed cuts will effect staffing levels, public hours and programming. They will also impede the library's ability to move forward with certain long time projects, including Audubon print restoration and other goals identified in our long-range plan. We are attempting to avoid lay-offs and branch closures.

An additional consideration for the library is certification through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. The MBLC maintains certification requirements, one of which is that libraries must meet a Minimum Appropriation Requirement (MAR). A library's minimum appropriation is based on a very slight increase (1.025%) to the library's three-year average appropriation from their municipality. The library's MAR for FY20 is $1,786,432.50. This means that cuts to the proposed budget that exceed $71,432.50 will put at risk our state certification. The discussed cuts do exceed this amount.

I have a hand-out available from MBLC that summarizes the effects of being de-certified by the state. In addition to seriously damaging the library's reputation, de-certification would mean a loss of around $65,000 in State Aide to Public Libraries. The library uses this money to supplement the book budget, utilities budget, and operating budget. It also covers $10,000 in programming, $11,000 in Audubon print restoration and $5,000-$8,000 in small building projects. Additionally, residents of communities whose libraries have been de-certified lose the ability to request or borrow books from other libraries. Last year over 22,000 items were delivered to Peabody's libraries from other libraries. This number does not include Peabody patrons who physically visited other libraries and check out items using their Peabody library card. Finally, de-certification makes the library ineligible for grant money for programs and/or construction grants. Grants from MBLC have been a major driving force behind many of our programs in the past 15 years including the expansion of teen programs, our community reading programs, our early literacy play spaces, the English Conversation Circles and the Creativity Lab.

Should these discussed cuts go forward, we would apply for a waiver from the MBLC, which would allow us to maintain our certification despite not meeting our MAR. The waiver process requires the City, the Board and the Library Director to submit statements and documentation explaining the budget process, documenting the City's budget shortfalls and proving that the cuts were proportionate across City Departments. The outcome of applying for a waiver is not guaranteed. Peabody has never had to apply for a waiver before.

The Mayor has offered to come to a meeting and answer questions from the Board if you feel that would be helpful.

Policy

I am suggesting that the Board approve changes to two library policies: the museum pass policy and the library behavior policy. I have copies of both policies for the Board, with changes highlighted.

The museum pass policy change is mostly a clean-up of language, but there is also a change to the policy regarding when museum passes may be picked-up. Some museums now allow patrons to print

passes from home. The new language change encompasses the three different types of museum passes now available: passes that must be picked up and returned to the library, passes that must be picked up, but are disposable and passes that can be printed from home.

The behavior policy includes three substantive changes. First, is changing the policy from "Patron Behavior" to "Library Behavior." This change will encompass anyone using the library for any reason, including patrons, staff, visitors, etc. The other two changes are based on language included in many urban library policies around the state. Including language to prohibit carrying firearms and dangerous weapons came to my attention after a patron asked a staff member at the Public Service Desk if concealed weapons are allowed in the library. After consulting with the City Solicitor and the Mayor, all three of us believe it is wise to include this language in library policy.

Policy Committee Chair Jean Ahearn has reviewed these policy changes. It is my suggestion that the Board review these policies and vote on them at the June meeting.

Program and Activities

Summer events brochures are available for your review. Please note that, as some of these programs take place after the start of the new fiscal year, some programs may be canceled if staffing levels are not sufficient.

On Saturday, May 4th, the library hosted the 3rd annual PILCon comic book convention. Senior Teen Librarian, Aubrey Apodaca reports that the event was very successful, with over 250 people attending workshops, programs and activities.

Other

A quick reminder that all City employees and elected officials need to complete conflict of interest training. Once it is complete, please send me the signed acknowledgement and certificate of completion that I can forward to the City Clerk. All of these must be completed by June 5, 2019.

The City's Charter Review Commission has completed its work and the City Clerk forwarded the proposed new charter to me. Since there are a number of changes that effect the Board of Trustees, I have copies for all Trustees of the section that pertains to the Board. The City Council will begin deliberations on this draft on Thursday, June 6th.

One final reminder for the Trustees is that the George Peabody Medal Ceremony honoring the Top 8 Peabody High School graduates this year will take place in the Sutton Room on Wednesday, May 15th at 5:30pm. Trustee President Stephanie Najjar will speak on behalf of the Trustees that evening.

The Board discussed the proposed budget cuts as reported by the Library Director. Director Robinson stated that the budget cut numbers were not final at that time so she didn't want to discuss the options she discussed with the Mayor in too much detail. Director Robinson stated her goal was avoid having to close a branch or have lay-offs because of the budget cuts and that was the Mayor's goal as well. Two avenues for cutting the budget that were currently available would be to not fill open positions and cutting branch hours. The current proposed budget cuts, which could change, equaled about 8% of the Library's budget or approximately $150,000, which far exceeded the number which would affect their qualification for state aid.

In response to a question from the Board, Director Robinson stated there were three main qualifications for the Library to be eligible for certification from the MBLC:

- Open 63 hours a week
- Spend 12% of a total budget on materials
- And need to meet MAR (as discussed)

Director Robinson clarified that if the Library didn't meet the hours or didn't spend 12% of their total budget on materials, they could still qualify to receive a percentage of state aid; however, if they didn't meet the MAR then they would have to apply for a waiver. Director Robinson stated that in order for them not need a waiver, they would need to see a $80,000 reduction in the cuts that were currently proposed.

Director Robinson reported that should they need a waiver they would apply in October. The MBLC would meet and decide on whether or not a waiver was granted. If they were denied a waiver, they could appeal the decision and there would be a resolution by April. The Library could reapply for certification and/or another waiver the following year.

The Board discussed what would be the appropriate action(s) to take regarding the proposed budget cuts. The Board agreed that they should draft a letter and send it to the Mayor and City Council. The Board also discussed letting the public know of the affect proposed budget cuts would have on the Library as it was a public building and should the proposed budget go through, the public would see a reduction in hours at the branches and less programming. The Board would discuss the issue further under the New Business of the Board.

Trustee Anne Quinn inquired as to whether or not there they had any further discussions about a possible lawsuit with regards to the elevator issues. Director Robinson stated that they did not think they could pursue a lawsuit as they couldn't pinpoint the problem with the degradation of the oil. Director Robinson reported the Director of Facilities did not seem to think it was worth the effort at that juncture.

Trustee Frances Bisazza-Gallugi explained, subsequent to a question from the Board, that the proposed changes to the City Charter with regards to the Trustees were made by the City Charter Review Commission which consisted of an eight-person panel. The information provided was for their review and information but at that point the proposed new charter was in process and would be voted on by the city council, then, if approved, signed by the Mayor.

Trustee Jean Ahearn stated that she thought George Peabody wanted the Trustees to serve 6-year terms but the proposed new charter changed the term length to four years. Trustee Ahearn stated she would look into the issue to see if that was George Peabody's wish. If so, they could always raise the issue at City Council prior to the vote.

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to accept the Director's Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Richard Shruhan. A vote was taken.
All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Reports of the Committees

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: Committee Chair Wes Merrill stated there was nothing to report in addition to the report provided by the Library Director.

AUDUBON PRINTS: Committee Chair Richard Shruhan stated there was nothing new on which to report.

PERSONNEL: Committee Chair Don McAllister stated the hiring committee continued the process of hiring a new Assistant Library Director.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES: Committee Chair Jean Ahearn asked the Board to review the two policies passed out by the Library Director and either discuss tonight or review for the June meeting.

The Board discussed the addition of the language regarding firearms to the Reasonable Library Behavior policy. Trustee Tom Pappas inquired as to whether or not the language "off-duty" was appropriate with regards to the police officers. Director Robinson stated that they did discuss the addition of that language but in the end agreed it was better to add it to that section of the policy.

In response to a question from the Board, Director Robinson reported they did discuss the addition of the firearms and dangerous weapons clause to the Reasonable Library Behavior policy with the City Solicitor and he recommended it was added to the policy as written.

President Najjar inquired as to what the procedure would be for the staff should they notice a patron with a firearm or weapon. Director Robinson stated the Library would recommend calling the non-emergency police number and ask for an officer to come and speak with the patron. Director Robinson stated that procedure was already in place should the staff feel that someone needed to be removed for any reason and they were not comfortable doing so. Director Robinsons reported that when any policy changes were approved, she briefed the staff on the change and procedural guidance was given.

Liaison to the Peabody Historical Society: Liaison Tom Pappas reported the Historical Society would be holding their Annual Meeting on May 15th, which he would be attending.

LIAISON TO THE FRIENDS OF THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY: Liaison Dianne Caputo reported the last meeting of the Friends was held on May 1st and provided the following update –

- Current budget was $10,504.
- Was a wishes month so they voted on gifting the Library $4,000 for programming.
- Friends purchased receipt holders for the books in the Library with the Friends logo.
- Voted to allocate $3,000 for the Library Museum Pass Program.
- Granted a $250 Library Page scholarship to Leigh-Mae Hubsizc.
- Submitted the International Festival application which included a $125 application fee.

LIAISON TO THE PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Liaison Anne Quinn reported that the Foundation Board met on April 10th. Trustee Quinn reported that Foundation President Martha Holden established new committees for the Foundation which included the following:

- Finance Committee – chaired by Anne Marie Burns. Director Burns was the Treasurer of the Foundation and was working with President Holden to put together an annual budget and to provide a more formalized report to the Board so it would be easier to keep track of the Foundation funds.
- Nomination Committee – Trustee Quinn would be chairing that Committee and would be working on expanding and reenergizing the Board. Trustee Quinn stated she would be sending the Trustees an email asking if they had any names of anyone who might be a potential member of the Foundation.
- Development Committee – chaired by Library Director and Foundation Director Melissa Robinson. The Development Committee would work with existing donors and would discuss how to cultivate donor relationships.

Trustee Quinn reported the next Foundation event would be a cocktail reception celebrating the Audubon Prints called "Birds and Bubbly". The event was scheduled for June 7th in the Sutton Room. Tickets were $60. The Foundation was hoping to have 75 people attend.

Trustee Quinn reported that after the Audubon cocktail reception was over, they would begin planning for Starry, Starry Night which would be on October 2, 2019.

A **MOTION** was made by Don McAllister to accept the Committee reports as presented. The motion was seconded Tom Pappas. A vote was taken.

All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

Unfinished Business

A **MOTION** was made by Jean Ahearn to approve the Home Delivery Policy as presented at the April 1, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Don McAllister. A vote was taken.

All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Board discussed the unofficial Trustee handbook and agreed it would be a useful tool to provide newly elected Trustees. Trustee Ahearn stated that as that was the case, she would send the document to Director Robinson to provide to Trustees as they start their terms on the Board.

New Business

A **MOTION** was made by Jean Ahearn to accept the Reasonable Library Behavior Policy as amended. The motion was seconded by Frances Bisazza-Gallugi. A vote was taken.
All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

A **MOTION** was made by Jean Ahearn to accept the Museum Pass Policy as amended. The motion was seconded by Frances Bisazza-Gallugi. A vote was taken.
All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Board discussed the issue of writing a letter regarding the proposed budget cuts. The Board agreed that they should write one letter which would then be signed by every Trustee.

The Board discussed what information should be included in the letter and how they should approach it. President Najjar agreed to draft the letter for the Board's review and requested that should anyone have anything they wanted included or thought was important for the letter to please email her. Director Robinson stated she would send President Najjar some statistical information on library usage as well. Once drafted, President Najjar stated she would send the letter to the Board for review.

The Board requested Library Director extend an invite to the Mayor to attend their June 3rd meeting to discuss the budget. Director Robinson stated she would do so.

As there was no additional business to come before the Board, a **MOTION** to adjourn was made by Wes Merrill. The motion was seconded by Richard Shruhan. A vote was taken.
All in Favor: Yes. Any Opposed: No. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

Submitted by,

Allison M. Lytle
Recording Secretary